



Isiah Leggett
County Executive



Darren M. Popkin
Sheriff

Office of the Sheriff
Domestic Violence Coordinating Council
Thursday, November 8, 2018
5:00 PM – 7:00 PM
Family Justice Center 5th Floor Conference Room
600 Jefferson Plaza, Suite 500, Rockville, Maryland 20852

Minutes

In Attendance: The Honorable Sidney Katz, Chair (Montgomery County Council); Nicole Drew (Montgomery County Commission for Women); Ingrid Gonzalez (Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services – Parole and Probation); Assistant Chief Marcus Jones (Montgomery County Department of Police); Tina Michaels (Montgomery County Department of Correction and Rehabilitation – Pre-trial Services); Smita Varia, Staff (Montgomery County Office of the Sheriff);

Guests: Lisa Mandel Trupp (Office of Montgomery County Councilmember Sidney Katz); Captain Sean Gagen (Montgomery County Department of Police); Lauren Brown (Member of the Public); Spencer Cantrell (Jewish Coalition Against Domestic Abuse); Amy Kass (Court Watch Montgomery); Juanita Murkey (House of Ruth);

Absent: Debbie Feinstein, Vice Chair (Montgomery County Office of the State's Attorney); Teresa Bennett (Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services); Tom Manion (Montgomery County Office of the Sheriff); The Honorable John Moffett (District Court for Montgomery County); The Honorable Karla Smith (Circuit Court for Montgomery County); The Honorable Rebecca Smondrowski (Montgomery County Public School – Board of Education); Lilah Katz (Student Member); Cheryl Kravitz (Community Member); Resa Levy (Community Member); Eshigo Okasili (Community Member); Mindy Thiel (Community Member); Ronald Whalen (Community Member);

I. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Sidney Katz welcomed all members and guests to the meeting. Everyone introduced themselves.

II. Approval of September Minutes

The September 13, 2018 DVCC meeting minutes were reviewed. Assistant Chief Marcus Jones proposed a motion to approve the minutes without revision. The motion was seconded by Tina Michaels and passed.

III. Announcements

Spencer Cantrell announced that the Jewish Coalition Against Domestic Abuse has an opening for Executive Director.

Smita Varia thanked those that were able to attend the Domestic Violence Proclamation on October 30th where the Montgomery County Executive and County Council proclaimed October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month. The Proclamation will be framed in the Family Justice Center.

IV. New Member Update

Councilmember Katz introduced two new members that have been appointed to the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council. Dr. Mindy Thiel is the new Community member. She is the Director of Chesapeake Counseling and runs the Safe Start Program. Safe Start is a group therapy program for children who witness domestic violence in the home. Lilah Katz is the new Student Member. She is a Junior at Richard Montgomery High School.

V. DVCC Statute Amendments Update

The County Executive has approved all 3 amendments to the DVCC Statute. The first amendment increases the term for the Chair and Vice Chair of the Coordinating Council from 1 year to 2 years. The second proposed change is adding 2 new seats for representatives from non-governmental or non-profit domestic violence service or advocacy organizations. The third proposed change allows a high school student in any grade to apply to the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council.

Councilmember Sidney Katz announced that he will introduce the Bill with these amendments on Tuesday, November 13th. The scheduled public hearing for the bill will be at 1:30 on December 4th, which is the first meeting with the newly elected Montgomery County Council.

VI. DVCC Leadership for 2019

The next meeting in January 2019 will be the last meeting where Sidney Katz is Chair and Debbie Feinstein is Vice Chair. The Council Members recognized them for their leadership during the past two years.

In January, Council Members will vote on a new Chair and Vice Chair. Smita Varia announced that Debbie Feinstein has expressed interest in running for Chair of the DVCC. Smita Varia asked those present for other nominations. No one else was nominated.

Smita Varia announced that Tom Manion has expressed interest in running for Vice Chair. Smita Varia asked those present for other nominations. No one else was nominated.

Smita Varia asked the Council Members to let her know if anyone else is interested in nominating either themselves or another member. She also said that it is imperative that members attend the next meeting on January 10th because a quorum is needed to elect a new Chair and Vice Chair.

VII. Committee Reports

A. Education and Outreach Committee - *Debbie Feinstein, Chair*

Smita Varia gave the updates for Debbie Feinstein. The Choose Respect Committee met in late October and had a robust discussion around the themes for this year's Choose Respect conference, a yearly conference focusing on dating violence prevention. The committee decided that they wanted to make sure discussions about consent are included in the workshops offered. The committee also decided to add conversations around consent as a topic that can be addressed for the annual Public Service Announcement video contest, along with physical, emotional, financial and technological abuse. The PSA contest is now open for students in 6th-12th grades to create a 60 second PSA in English or Spanish, and the deadline is March 8, 2019.

The Department of Transportation has approved having the FJC Multi-Language Cards available on all 375 Ride On Buses. Smita Varia created a brochure size version of the card to fit the holders on the buses. The cards should be available on all of the buses in the next month. The cards were printed with generous contributions from the Commission for Women, Councilmember Sidney Katz's office and the Montgomery County Family Justice Center Foundation.

The Expect Respect Presentations about healthy relationships and dating violence are going well. In the past 2 months, the facilitators have been to 9 high schools and middle schools and reached over 1,400 students.

Slides about domestic violence, how it affects children and services at the FJC have now been incorporated in the mandatory contested custody parenting classes at the Circuit Court. All of the Circuit Court evaluators also toured the FJC a few weeks ago.

Lastly, because of the recent hazing incident at Damascus High School, Smita Varia and Donna Rismiller with DVS Legal Services have been getting a lot of interest from the PTA and schools about Coaching Boys Into Men, a coach led program that teaches athletes that violence never equals strength. They had a conversation with the PTA earlier today and are creating a strategy to try to implement the program in more schools.

Assistant Chief Jones said that any education and awareness should not only include male athletes, but female athletes as well. Smita Varia agreed and said that the Education and Outreach Committee is now promoting both Coaching Boys Into Men (for male athletes) and Athletes as Leaders (for female athletes) together.

B. Victim Services Committee update - Tom Manion, Chair

Smita Varia gave the update for Tom Manion. Tom Manion was invited to speak about domestic violence and the Family Justice Center at forensic nursing conference in Brazil, which is where he is now.

The selection process for 2 Client Assistant vacancies at the Family Justice Center is moving forward and Tom Manion hopes the new employees will start in the next couple of months.

Tom Manion and the Family Justice Center is hoping to increase programming for youth as secondary victims next year. He will have more details in January.

Lastly, the FJC is collaborating with the Maryland Coalition Against Domestic Violence (MNADV) on a new Lethality Assessment Program (LAP) research project. FJC staff are assisting them by referring clients to the study and providing LAP data as needed. MNADV is looking to expand the LAP for use by court personnel.

C. Offender Program and Policy Committee – Tina Michaels, Chair

Tina Michaels reported that the Offender Program and Policy Committee have not met recently but will be meeting in December. The Violation of Conditions of Release law (HB 388/SB 170) went into effect on October 1st. Tina Michaels reported that Pre-Trial has had 2 instances, which were not domestic violence related, to use the law, however the process did not go smoothly. For one of the cases, the officer did not have access to Secure Case Search (the system where police are supposed to be able to look up the bond conditions). The officer wanted data which the afterhours staff at the Pre-Release Center did not have

access to. Instead of being able to make the arrest on scene, they ended up filing the violation with the court, had the hearing and he is now incarcerated.

The second case happened today in which the victim called the State's Attorney's Office. Because the case is with Circuit Court, the information was not available in Secure Case Search. Circuit Court Cases will be included in the new database system in 2019. Tina Michaels was able to work with the officer to go to the building where the offender was reported to be, but the offender was no longer present. They were able to work together because it was during regular business hours, however, if it was after hours, the information would not have been available. Tina Michaels is still trying to get the bond conditions into the METERS database. Tina Michaels is also working with the Police Department's Records Coordinator to have the court paperwork in their files for cases such as today's to make sure the information is available.

Tina Michaels also announced that at Pre-Trial Services, two domestic violence case workers, Shaunda Legg and Mary Lalos, have rotated off, and there are four domestic violence case workers, Sara Piorko, Gunnar, Carmen Solis and Clara McLean.

D. Legislative and Policy Planning Committee – Assistant Chief Marcus Jones, Chair

Assistant Chief Marcus Jones said that they have served 8 Extreme Risk Protective Orders (ERPO) since October 1st. The ERPO allows the police or a concerned family member to request to have any firearms a person owns or has access to, taken away. Two of the ERPOs have been domestic violence related. When the Police feel the need to get an ERPO, it is handled by the District Investigators, unless it is domestic violence related, in which case it will be handed by the Domestic Violence unit.

All counties in Maryland are still trying to see what policies work best with this new law. The goal in Montgomery County is to have the ERPOs filed by the Police and not the victims.

Assistant Chief Marcus Jones stressed that we need to get the word out that the ERPO is an option to take weapons out of someone's hands.

Assistant Chief Marcus Jones also wants to recruit members for the legislative committee. Nicole Drew is interested in being involved.

Smita Varia mentioned that one bill she is interested in seeing is have Maryland have "Advocates Privilege." This would allow the Client Assistants at the FJC confidentiality, and to not be subpoenaed for court.

VIII. Adjournment

Sidney Katz, Chair, adjourned the meeting at 6:18 pm.

The next DVCC meeting will be on January 10, 2019, 5pm-7pm at the Family Justice Center



Domestic Violence Coordinating Council